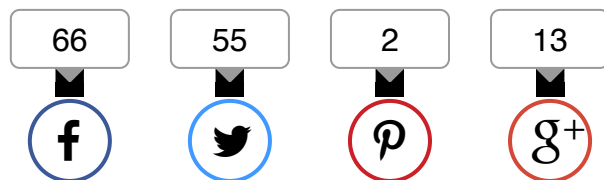




## interview with thomas hirschhorn ahead of engadin art talks 2019



the year of art for 2019 begins with the ninth edition of the renowned engadin art talks (E.A.T.) (<https://engadin-art-talks.ch/>). the annual art, architecture, design, film, science, and literature forum and festival takes place on **january 26th and 27th, 2019** in zuoz, switzerland, and provides an interdisciplinary platform for global dialogue on a spectrum of creative fields and a catalyst for new ideas, discourses and trends. each year, a new theme determines the framework for the conversations led this year by **daniel**

**baumann** (director of the kunsthalle zurich), **bice curiger** (artistic director of the fondation vincent van gogh arles), **hans ulrich obris**t (artistic director of the serpentine galleries london), and **philip ursprung** (professor for the history of art and architecture at ETH zurich.).

since its inception in 2010, engadin art talks has invited more than 150 speakers to present their ideas and visions on socially-relevant themes that continuously seek to inspire and surprise.



speakers from a range of creative fields will discuss the 2019 engadin art talks theme, 'grace & gravity'

this year, creative minds from a range of fields explore the theme of 'grace & gravity': how the contradictory forces define contemporary life in the digital age — with speakers including **elizabeth diller** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/diller-scofidio-and-renfro/>), **thomas hirschhorn**

(<https://www.designboom.com/tag/thomas-hirschhorn/>), **tomás saraceno** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/tomas-saraceno/>), and **jürgen teller**.

**how do gravity and grace define current-day life in the digital age?** gravity and grace present a meeting of two conflicting forces: on one hand is the concept of mass and gravity with all the power that draws us earthwards. on the other is the unburdened fluidity of grace and elegance which brings the positive momentum of beauty into play. further to E.A.T, the zuoz region offers such cultural highlights as the outdoor sculpture park, '**art public plaiv**' (see a plan of the area below). the exhibition program of artistic initiatives and venues is updated regularly **here** (<https://engadin-art-talks.ch/en/exhibitions.html>).

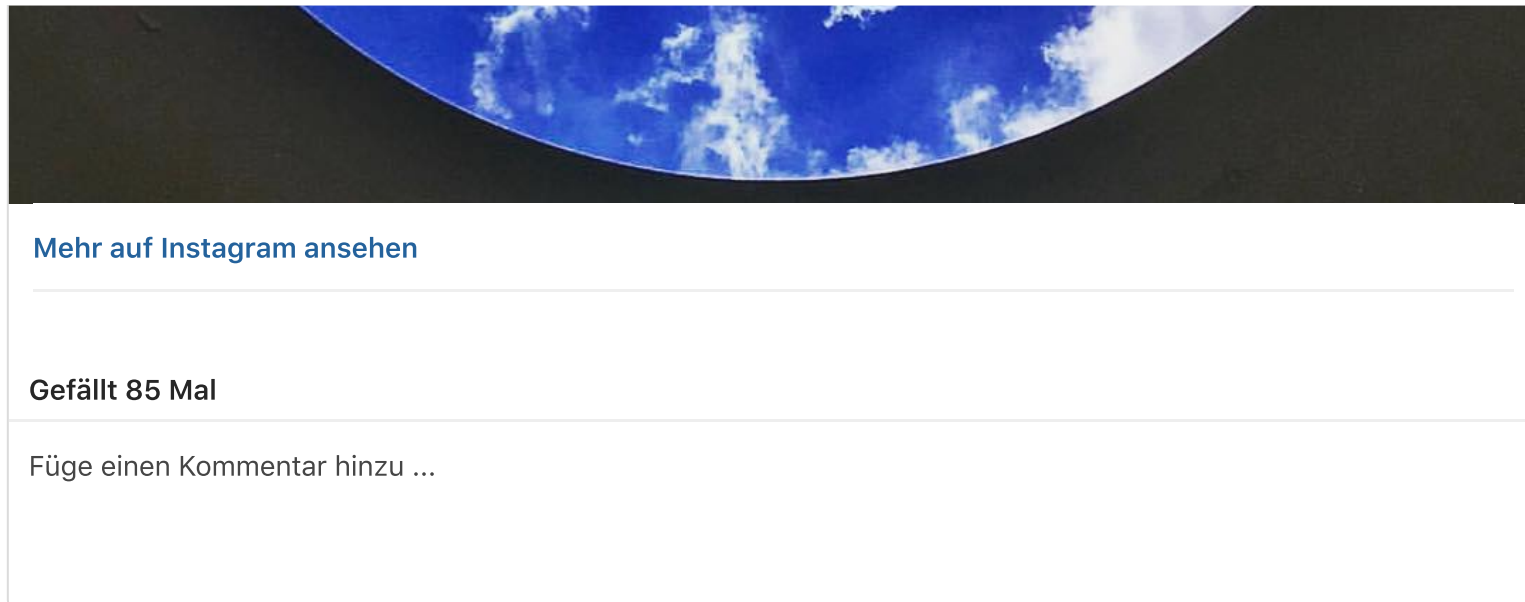
**in advance of the forum, designboom spoke with swiss artist thomas hirschhorn regarding the spirit of his work and his involvement in the upcoming 2019 engadin art talks** (<https://engadin-art-talks.ch/>).



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**designboom (DB):** what are the creative strategies you adopt when working?

**thomas hirschhorn (TH):** I want to give form, my own form, my very own form. I want to do a work of art which creates a critical corpus. I want to work for a non-exclusive audience and I want to work with and in the institution, but also in public space. the strategy-definition — which I love and follow — is: 'to choose the points of application of my force.' my force is my form. I know it, therefore I decide to apply my force where it's necessary.







portrait of thomas hirschhorn, a speaker at the upcoming engadin art talks

**DB: what do you think is the role of an artist in society today?**

**TH:** I can't speak for others, but I want to understand art as a tool. I want to understand art as a tool to encounter the world. I want to understand art as a tool to live in the time I am living, and I want to understand art as a tool to confront reality.





the zuoz region offers such cultural highlights as the outdoor sculpture park, 'art public plaiv' james turrell (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/james-turrell/>) | skyspace, 2005 | no.6 on map below

**DB:** what is the common thread that underpins your work overall?

**TH:** the attempt to establish a critical corpus, the attempt to insist through form — in giving form — on the importance of 'form' as such, and the attempt to reach a non-exclusive audience.

**DB:** how does this year's engadin art talks theme 'grace & gravity' resonate with you?

**TH:** thanks to the proposed theme of the 'engadin art talks', I could encounter the thinking of the philosopher simone weil. for years, I have loved and have been using the notion of 'grace' that appears with my work. the theme 'grace & gravity' was a welcome invitation to develop, clarify and set the meaning and importance of 'grace' in and with my work.



martin kippenberger (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/martin-kippenberger/>) | transportabler u-bahn  
eingang, 1997 | no.8 on map below

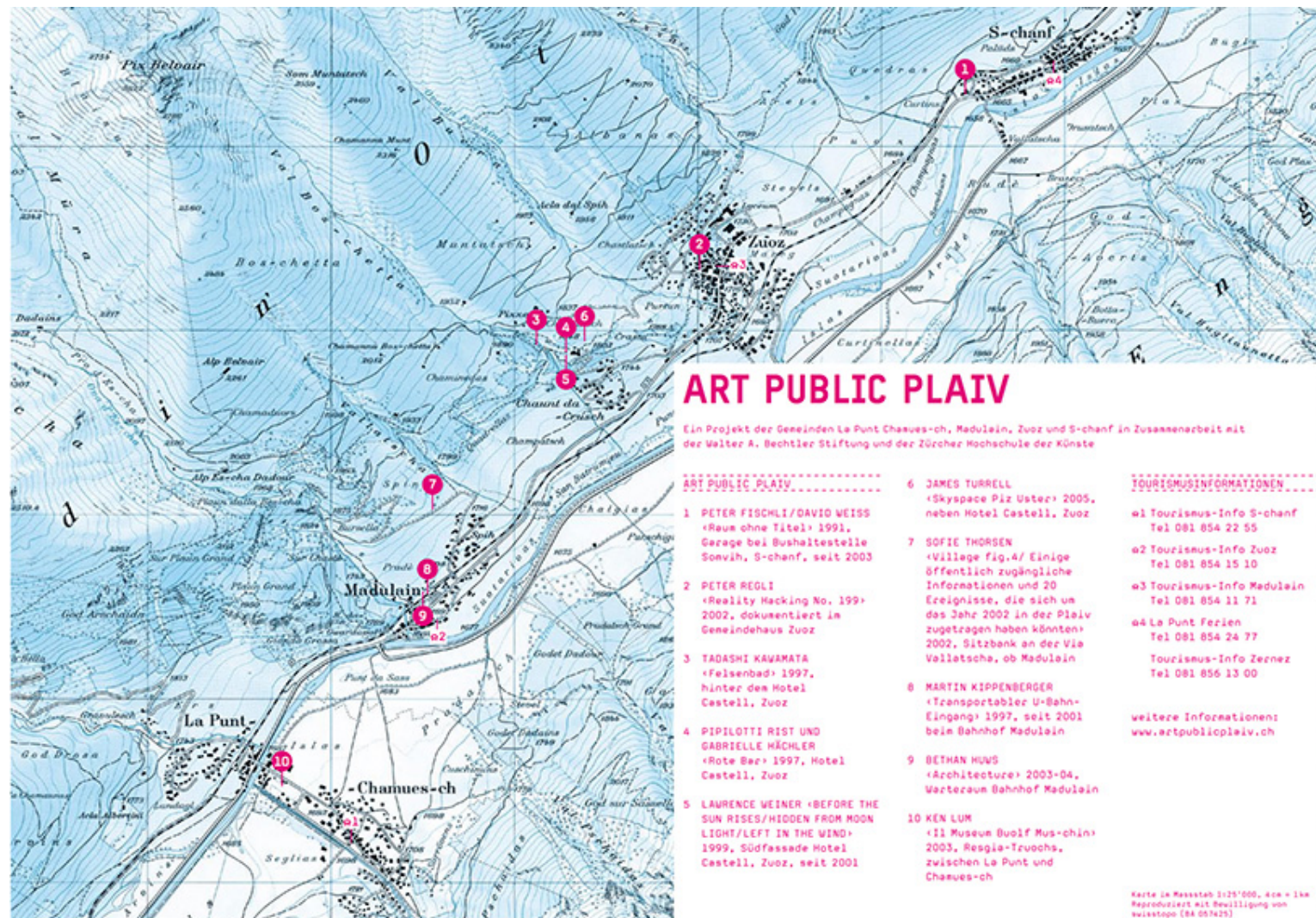
**DB: can you recall some moments of grace that you've encountered while working?**

**TH:** I will do this in my lecture at the 'engadin art talks.'

**DB: what are the themes you hope your most recent work provokes a discussion about?**

**TH:** the themes — my themes — are: energy — yes! quality — no! the essentiality of form and how to give a form which — as such — is.





'art public plaiv' site map

a project in cooperation with the walter a. bechtler foundation (<http://www.bechtlerstiftung.ch/>) and the zurich university of the arts (<https://www.zhdk.ch/>)

DB: what role do you want an audience to play in encountering your work?

**TH:** I want the audience to get implicated in my work. when someone says: 'I feel involved in your work!' this makes me happy.

**DB:** what are you afraid of regarding the future? what are you optimistic about?

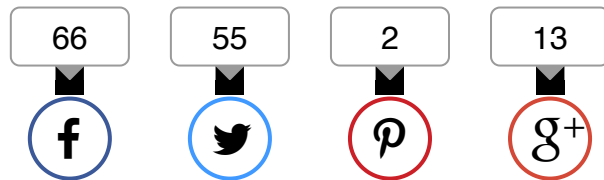
**TH:** I am not afraid of the future. I work beyond pessimism or optimism. a notion I do agree upon is the notion of hope: 'hope' as the principle of taking action, of having a dream, of being passionate.



**E.A.T. / engadin art talks** (<https://engadin-art-talks.ch/>) is an annual forum and festival for art, architecture, design, fashion, film, science, and literature which takes place in Zuoz, Switzerland. E.A.T.'s mission is to provide an interdisciplinary platform for a global dialogue on the arts and different creative fields. internationally recognized for its line-up of leading artists, architects, writers, scientists, and disruptive minds from all over the world, E.A.T. has invited so far more than 120 speakers that have presented their ideas and visions on challenging social relevant themes since its inception in 2010. E.A.T. was founded by Cristina Bechtler together with Hans Ulrich Obrist.

**kat barandy | designboom**

**jan 21, 2019**



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**engadin art talks (e.a.t.)** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/engadin-art-talks>)  
(3 articles)



'demelza kids' by  
juergen teller - in  
conversation with the  
photographer

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/juergen-teller-demelza-kids-02-04-2019/>)

muzeum susch:  
contemporary art  
museum opens in  
switzerland's engadin

valle juergen-  
(<https://www.designboom.com/architecture/muzeum-susch-engadin-switzerland-chasper-schmidlin-lukas-voellmy-01-25-2019/>)

**james turrell** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/james-turrell>) (20 articles)

james turrell closes  
MoMA PS1 installation  
because of intrusive  
construction scaffolding  
(<https://www.designboom.com/art/james-turrell-closes-moma-ps1-meeting-01-30-2019/>)

james turrell's roden  
crater set to open after  
45 years, following \$10  
million injection from  
kerry james  
(<https://www.designboom.com/art/james-turrells-roden-crater-james-turrell-skyspaces-north-arizona-desert-02-15-2016/>)

james turrell and marina  
abramović to design spa  
for motown hotel in  
australia  
(<https://www.designboom.com/art/james-turrell-and-marina-abramovic-spa-motown-hotel-hobart-tasmania-12-14-2018/>)

**thomas hirschhorn** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/thomas-hirschhorn>)  
(7 articles)

thomas hirschhorn  
 constructs flamme  
 eternelle within paris'  
 palais de tokyo  
 (<https://www.designboom.com/art/thomas-hirschhorn-flamme-eternelle-paris-palais-de-tokyo-05-21-2014/>)

thomas hirschhorn:  
 crystal of resistance at  
 venice art biennale  
 2011  
 (<https://www.designboom.com/art/thomas-hirschhorn-crystal-of-resistance-at-venice-art-biennale-2011/>)

thomas hirschhorn: the  
 subjecter  
 (<https://www.designboom.com/art/thomas-hirschhorn-the-subjecter/>)

**tomás saraceno** (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/tomas-saraceno>) (10 articles)

tomás saraceno  
composes a sundial of  
solar umbrellas +  
floating sculptures in  
miami beach  
(<https://www.designboom.com/art/tomas-saraceno-audemars-piguet-miami-albedo-art-basel-solar-umbrellas-12-10-2018/>)

tomás saraceno  
suspends sundial for  
spatial echoes at aker  
brygge in oslo  
(<https://www.designboom.com/art/tomas-saraceno-sundial-for-spatial-echoes-aker-brygge-oslo-07-22-2015/>)

tomas saraceno's solar  
bell floating sculpture  
takes flight  
([https://www.designboom.com/art/tomas-solar-bell-floating-sculpture-takes-flight/](https://www.designboom.com/art/tomas-saraceno-solar-bell-floating-sculpture-takes-flight/))

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**art news**

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/joana-vasconcelos-le-bon-marche-simone-branco-luz-02-18-2019/>)

**joana vasconcelos invades le bon marché with monumental embroidered creature 'simone'**

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/joana-vasconcelos-le-bon-marche-simone-branco-luz-02-18-2019/>)

#art (/art)

the piece is on display from 17 january to 24 march.

#joana vasconcelos (<https://www.designboom.com/art/joana-vasconcelos-le-bon-marche-simone-branco-luz-02-18-2019/>)

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/sheena-liam-embroiderer-embroidery-art-model-asia-next-top-model-02-11-2019/>)

**sheena liam, model and embroiderer, sculpts her hair with loose thread**

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/sheena-liam-embroiderer-embroidery-art-model-asia-next-top-model-02-11-2019/>)

#art (/art)

the hoop is to an embroiderer what a canvas is to a painter, and a stage is to a model.



#embroidered art (<https://www.designboom.com>).

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1230

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/desert-x-installations-round-up-02-13-2019/>)

**desert X installations include  
sundial staircases, AR artworks,  
and a flag made of smoke**

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/desert-x-installations-round-up-02-13-2019/>)

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/sterling-ruby-specter-desert-x-orange-monolith-art-installation-02-13-2019/>)

**sterling ruby embeds neon orange  
monolith into coachella valley's  
desert landscape**

(<https://www.designboom.com/art/sterling-ruby-specter-desert-x-orange-monolith-art-installation-02-13-2019/>)

**#art (/art)**

the works, by artists such as john gerrard and iván argote, will remain on view to the public until april 21, 2019.

#desert X (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/desert-x/>)  
#public art (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/public-art/>)

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**#art (/art)**

installed as part of desert X, the bright, geometric sculpture acts as a cipher, mimicking the form it could be – a shipping container or a military bunker.

#desert X (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/desert-x/>)  
#public art (<https://www.designboom.com/tag/public-art/>)

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**[all art news \(https://www.designboom.com/art/\)](https://www.designboom.com/art/)**